READERS EXCHANGE

I am glad to see you come out for the correct use of commands and examples, saying that examples are binding only as they illustrate some command. There is no other way to avoid confusion but to believe this. We have no essential doctrine that depends solely upon either an example or a necessary inference. – *F. L. Lemley, 128 N. Norwine, Bonne Terre, Mo. 63628*

As to John the Baptist being "the greatest," remember that your Boss said "the least in the kingdom is greater than John." The question simply put is *Are the gifts from God?* If so, celebrate them, obviously not in place of or above the giver. 1 Cor. 14:1 is in somewhat the nature of a command. Your article pays lip service to believing in them, but you're such a rationalist. I presume you're very uncomfortable with a God you can't paragraph and cite. He is Lord! And the word clearly states He gives gifts which He said for us to seek until He comes. You presume that signs and tongues are vs. the Word. Not so if from the Lord. If they aren't from Jesus forbid that any should exercise them. But if they are from the Lord and used under His authority and control, then Leroy, brother, relax and let Him decide who uses them and where. – *John Acuff, Cookeville, Tennessee*

(Ok, I'm relaxed, and if the Lord gives such gifts, I'm all for it, and I praise God too. And I'm not saying he doesn't. My article on John's ministry was to the effect that it was wonderfully great and was *without* miracles. At a time when so many seem to be "taken" by signs, I think it appropriate that we be reminded that a ministry can be great without them. Now don't put me on, John!)

Since our elders "banned" *Restoration Review* and *Mission Messenger,* more people want to know what you have to say, and of course I am anxious to share your good words with them to help them break out of the prison of the system and find a personal, full and rich relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ – *name withheld*

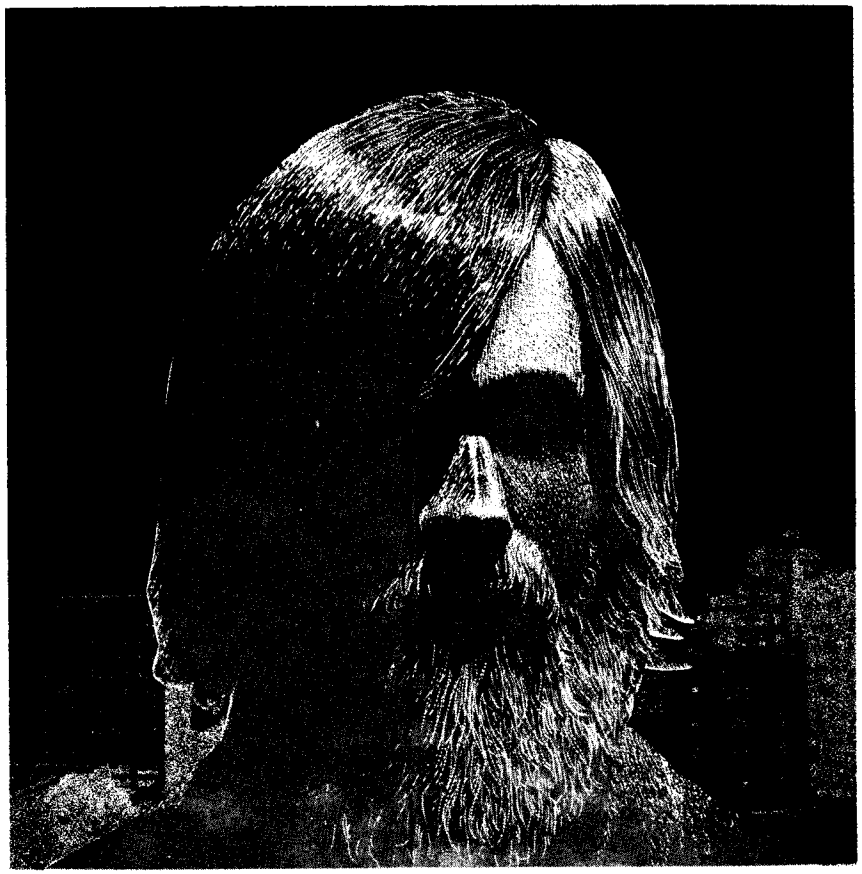
I appreciate your article "Is the Church Under Law?" It has clarified it so much. Many times I've heard it said that we are legalistic if we think we are now under law since "we are under grace." We are enjoying beautiful springtime when everything comes alive. It is a wonderful world God has given us to live in! – *Grace Bailey, Chillicothe, Mo.*

Cecil Hook Preachers + Money Fredericksburg + Hatties

RESTORATION REVIEW

Leroy Garrett, Editor

June, 1974 Volume 16, No. 6



" . . . I am the light of the world; He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." – *John 8:12*

The Church of Christ Yesterday and Today . . .

IS THE KINGDOM THE CHURCH?

The position taken in this editorial is that the kingdom of God *involves* the church rather than being identical with it. The church is a corollary of the kingdom, which is to say that the church followed in due course from the preaching of the coming kingdom, which resulted in the call of the church. The kingdom surely involves more than the church, but it does involve the church. If God's communion with man be likened to the refreshing rains, the church would be the former rain and the kingdom the latter rain. It is God leading His people from one level of glory to the next. A rose in the bud is surely a rose, but the fulness of its glory comes when it is unfolded in all its majesty. That God is up to something is evident in the church, but the scriptures, if not reason itself, make it clear that there is much more to come.

To speak of the kingdom is to get at the real substance of religion. The Pharisees, confronted with all the excitement about the kingdom, asked Jesus when it was to come, which might have been one of their more sincere questions. Jesus may have been speaking quite directly, and not cryptically, when he answered them: "The coming of the kingdom of God does not admit of observation and there will be no one to say, 'Look here! Look there!' For, you must know, the kingdom of God is among you" (Lk. 17:20). A better translation might be: the kingdom of God is *inside* you. But for Jesus to tell them that the kingdom is "among you" is a more direct answer to their question, indicating that it is something already present and active.

The main point is that the kingdom is not some external demonstration of military or political glory such as the Jews were expecting. Jesus hardly looked the part of king or Messiah they wanted, and so he was rejected. They longed for a kingdom that would come in magnificent procession, a glittering king in command, triumphing over all their enemies. Jesus told them that it would come with no such demonstration. It is something *internal*. It is spiritual. It is something inside you. Jesus is really saying that the kingdom has no locale, which is a lesson for all those who would relate the kingdom closely to the church, which is more often than not viewed in terms of its external features rather than its internal character. The Pharises were asking about locale (How will we see it and where will we see it as we watch from the grandstand?), while Jesus in his reply talks about *character*.

Maybe this is why the New Covenant scriptures say so much about what the kingdom is *not*, which is what Jesus is doing with the Pharisees. *It is not visible*, he is saying, and *it is not demonstrable, it is not external. It is rather inside human hearts.* How jarring that must have been to people looking for a super King David or Judas Maccabeus! Even Mt. 12:26 has that negative element that says as much about what the kingdom is not as what it is: "If it is through the Spirit of God that I cast out devils, then know that the kingdom of God has overtaken you." Exorcism was common in those days, but is was not common for one to practice it by the power of the Spirit of God. It was evident that Jesus acted by God's power, not Beelzebul's. In so acting he was relieving human misery and overcoming those woes brought on by Satan. This is what the kingdom of God is all about.

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Barclay says on this passage: "It is very significant to note that the sign of the coming of the Kingdom was not full churches and great revivalistic meetings, but the *defeat of pain.*" The kingdom has to do with what is happening in men's hearts and minds. It "overtakes" us or is "already arrived" when this kind of work is going on.

1 Cor. 4:20 assures us that "the kingdom is not just words, it is power," and the context suggests that the apostle is placing *doing for God* over against self-esteem. He is concerned about what people do, not what they say out of self-importance, for the kingdom is not mere talk but it is the power that changes lives. And so Ro. 14:17 says: "the kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking this or that, it means righteousness and joy and peace brought by the Holy Spirit." Here again the scriptures cut far below the external to describe the kingdom as having subjective character. Rather than being this or that religious ritual or regulation, the kingodm has to do with a right relationship with God and man, and it is evident in one's life when the Holy Spirit reaches deeply within and opens up a wellspring of joy. Power, peace, joy, cleansing, righteousness are the stuff of the kingdom, and it may be that the modern church has as much trouble seeing that as did the Pharisees.

Another very revealing passage is Mk. 12:34 where Jesus tells a man "You are not far from the kingdom of God," a statement that could hardly be made in reference to the church. It was when the man appeared to understand the role of God's love in the human heart that Jesus said that to him.

If we allow the term "reign" to stand for kingdom, which is a better translation of the Greek word (Campbell's *Living Oracles* uses "reign" altogether, never "kingdom"), these passages take on more meaning. If God reigns in one's heart, then there will be peace, joy and power. And where else could God's reign on earth be except "inside you"? This would have Jesus saying something like "You are beginning to allow God to rule your heart" instead of "You are not far from the kingdom."

So, when Jesus has us pray "thy reign come," he is referring to that character of life that is surrendered to the will of God. The next line of the prayer supports this: "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The will of heaven is subject to the Father. When this is the character of our own hearts and lives, this *is* the reign of God on earth.

There are upwards of 70 parables recorded in the gospel accounts, which leaves one to wonder how many Jesus must have told. These are calculated to teach us the nature of the kingdom,

and it is significant that the source material for these stories are from the simple life of Palestine in the time of Jesus, even if the parables are not always that simple. In seeing the kingdom in these parables it is important that we remember that they are parables and not allegories. The difference is that in an allegory the meaning is to be de-coded point by point, for every part of it has its counterpart in meaning. A parable, however, has one main point, with all the details serving to make that one thrust more realistic. The parable of the prodigal son, for example, is intended to show the grace of God and His forgiveness to the penitent. It spoils the story to make it an allegory by finding some special meaning in every point. Tertullian, one of the fathers of the early church, started interpreters in this direction. In this parable the elder son was the Jew and the younger one the Christian. The inheritance that the younger son laid claim to is the knowledge of God that each man is heir to. The owner of the hog pen is the devil. The ring is baptism, the feast the Lord's Supper, and the fatted calf the sacrifice of Christ.

But if we look for that one great thrust in each parable, we will do as our Lord intended by learning a great deal about the character of the kingdom of God. They show us that the kingdom is subject to fantastic and unexplainable growth (the mustard seed and the leaven); it is diverse, made up of all kinds of people (the net with all the fishes); it grows and yields despite failure and difficulty (the sower); and it has the marks of a Great Supper to which all are invited.

The parables also reveal God's grace and goodness to sinful man, which makes possible His rule in human hearts (laborers in the vineyard), and in the three great parables of Lk. 15, the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son, Jesus is showing that God loves His erring creatures far more than man desires to recover his lost property. Then there are those parables that describe those who make up the kingdom as counting the cost of discipleship (tower builder, the king who made war), and once the cost is paid the rewards are great (costly pearl, hidden treasure). And those in the kingdom are to be compassionate (unmerciful steward) and determined (importunate widow, the friend at midnight). Then there are those that show that the coming kingdom is a time of crisis, judgment and emergency, such as the rich fool, the barren fig tree, and the foolish maidens.

These parables compel us to respond to Jesus in terms of his mission and person, and in turn the implication that this has in reference to our relations with others, and this is what the kingdom is all about. God's "secret" is tucked away in the parables, hidden from the wise and revealed to babes. When we read of the binding of the strong man, the overcoming of evil, the physician that heals the sick, the cleansing of the lepers, the remvoal of the burden of guilt, the opening of the Father's house, and the joy that fills heavy hearts, we know something is up. The rule of God is here!

The church is involved in all this. If we can say that the kingdom has been inauguarated and that the church is an expression of this, we have to add that the kingdom awaits final consumsumation. Nations have not yet beat their swords into plows, nor has the knowledge of the Lord covered the earth as the waters cover the seas. The New Jerusalem as foreseen by Isaiah with all its peace and goodwill upon the earth, has not yet graced human history. The rose is yet to bloom into the fulness of its glory. If we think of the church as D-Day in God's program, then the fulness of the kingdom will be V-Day. – *the Editor*

HOW TO BE A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST WITHOUT BEING RELIGIOUS

Holding the form of religion but denying the power of it. – 2 Tim. 3:5

It is true in most every modern church that if anyone in its membership is really spiritual, he is an exception, if not something of a problem. It is like having an exceptionally bright child in the home or classroom. It seems better for all concerned if he just settles down and be *normal.* I recall James Bryant Conant, when he was campaigning for better education in our schools, recount the story of a mother who made her way to him after a speech, complaining, "I don't want my child to be exceptional, for I don't want him to be a problem!"

Churches and their leadership are often like that about "super spiritual" people, to use Frances Shaeffer's term. But this refers to more than tongue-speakers or healers or miracle workers who appear now and again in many of our congregations. It is the deeply spititual man, the serious Bible student, the intellectually curious, the man of prayer, and the committed soul that is also *abnormal,* causing those about him to be a bit uneasy. Without really saying so, they would rather that he be ordinary (Jesus calls it *lukewarm)* like they are. The modern church is no place to be religious. Maybe in a prayer group or a house church, but not at Fifth and Izzard, whether it be Baptist, Methodist or Church of Christ.

In my meanderings about the country, primarily amongst Church of Christ – Christian Church folk, I hear tales that lead me to but one conclusion: *before one goes very far among us he must learn how to make it without being religious.* I have ministers to tell me, for instance, that elders' meetings can go on and on, time after time, without a single prayer to the Father. And where there is prayer it so often appears to be perfunctory. For elders and preachers to meet "with all prayer and supplication" must be a rarity.

One young minister was telling me recently that in the congregation where he labors in campus work that he has never been invited to any kind of study or prayer with the senior minister. "We conduct business with each other," he said, "but we have never yet prayed together about our common tasks." Others who work with busy preachers will tell you that in personal conversations they seldom talk about Jesus or the scriptures. The truth is that one is likely to get along quite well in the Church of Christ without ever mentioning the Lord! Listen in on the conversations that take place in a congregation those few minutes before "the worship" starts. You will probably hear about a lot of things

and people before you hear anything of Jesus and the scriptures. Even to see folk these days with a Bible, refreshing their minds by reading some here and there before the service begins, is all too rare.

I venture to say that our folk can hold more business meetings, debates, lectureships, revivals, seminars, and forums and do less praying than any church on earth. Our people, whether laity or elders or preachers, hardly know what it means to meet together to pray. One is left to wonder if elders pray with their wives, if preachers pray with their families. One of our older preachers used to contend that the average church does not have as many as five families that study and pray together.

I cut my teeth on this kind of non-religious church life. Though brought up in a Church of Christ home, I never witnessed any representative of the church ever praying in our home. My old Dad learned to read by pouring over the *Dallas News*, the *Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*, and the Bible, which he often read, and I can remember how he would pray with his face buried in his old cane-bottomed rocking chair, unaware of anyone around him. He often talked about the Word, but he never attempted to teach his family to pray.

When I went away to Freed-Hardeman I found almost no devotional life. The president of the college, a good and dear man to me, would poke fun at the boys around who made it a point to kneel in prayer. They looked like the south end of a northbound jackass, he would tell us. I don't recall any prayers in class, either there or later at Abilene, with but very few exceptions. It was at Princeton that I first heard teachers begin their classes with prayer, serious prayers that were so different from what I had heard. The then young and brilliant Bruce Metzger, now one of the outstanding New Testament scholars of the world, would begin his class by intoning: "We are people of unclean lips, and we dwell among people of unclean lips . . ." Old Dr. Gehman, editor of the *Westminster Dictionary of the Bible* and now retired, prayed in his German accent and it was really something else. Being so scholarly, he would pray often: " . . . and free us from unfounded inferences and immature conclusions." What really impressed me was their occasional "Day of Prayer," for which classes were dismissed. Ralph Graham, my fellow Church of Christ student, and I would get behind in our studies and would facetiously tell each other that we surely needed another prayer day so we could catch up on our Hebrew. We hadn't yet learned to pray, but we were studying!

I did not find the kind of piety at Harvard that was apparent at Princeton, but while at Harvard I would occationally make my way to the Episcopal Seminary to look in on the training of rectors for the Episcopal Church, both high and low. One time I caught them in a "Day of Meditation." They could be seen in small gatherings here and there over the campus in quietude – reading, meditating, praying, and sometimes sharing. I listened in on one gathering and heard the leader saying: "Holiness (he spelled it) is like wholeness (he spelled it). We are holy when God makes us whole, which is really what salvation means."

You would have to be "at home" at places like Freed-Hardeman or even Abilene to be able to realize the complete unlikelihood of anything like that ever occuring on campus, or in the congregational life of our people. In fact, our few men of piety have had sort of a hard time among us. I think of J. N. Armstrong, R. H. Boll, T. B. Larimore, R. H. Bell, L. L. Brigance, E. L. Jorgenson, old S. P. Pittman at Lipscomb, and the like. They were sort of misfits in a way, for they were pious in an impious church. The brother Neal that debated Foy Wallace on the millennium could be included. Brother Wallace criticized brother Neal for beginning his presentations with prayer. At Freed-Hardeman I heard Armstrong and Boll criticized. They were "softies", and brother Boll was depicted as a man who somehow managed to let himself get caught in his room praying. And T. B. Larimore was always talking about love when every sound preacher knew he ought to be taking a stand on instrumental music. Once in class at Freed-Hardeman old brother Brigance broke down and wept as he talked about the sacrifices of the apostles. It was the strangest thing I'd ever seen in all my born days, a grown preacher man crying. But that moment nestled itself in my heart and today it lives on as one of the few tender moments in all my Church of Christ education. For the most part I was taught by men 30 or 40 years my senior to poke fun at godly men who are "pious" (derogatory) and who talk about love "like sick calves crying for their mother." And I was all too long getting over that kind of education. God forgive me!

It just wouldn't do for me to make another list – and it could be a rather long one – of leading preachers in the Church of Christ who have had less than good reputations in their association with women, some being my own teachers and associates. We could well do with some days of prayer, meditation, and soul-searching.

Add to all this some of the "behind the scenes" firing of preachers, competition between preachers, dismissals of college professors, shenanigans in administrative offices of our colleges, deceit in getting federal funds for colleges, breach of promises at high levels, churches foresaking missionaries in the field for some doctrinal irregularity, withdrawals of fellowship of some of our loveliest and most spiritual people, dirty church politics at several levels, and downright rudeness to those who dare to be different, and such like, and you have a sad and sordid commentary on how one can be impious and do just all right for himself in the Church of Christ. Our folk do not have to await a Watergate to be appalled!

In fact, one faces two serious hazards if he grows up in our ranks. Getting an education and start thinking is one. The other is becoming a spiritual person. Take Pat and Shirley Boone. And Pat's father Archie and his mother Margaret. And his sister Margie. All of them treated as if they were malefactors. To say they were treated rudely is to understate what happened. And *many* Churches of Christ were in on the massacre of a sweet and spiritual family. God help us! And the Boones are but the beginning of a long list of noble and free spirits, the very ones that could do the most for us, that we have bruised and battered for being a little different from ourselves.

While we are making lists, a long one could be made of those brillant

young minds who have left us in hopeless desperation. The editor of the *Firm Foundation* recently lamented the loss of so many like this, due mainly to our failure to provide a meaningful direction for our people.

Yet I must insist that we have many dedicated, knowledgeable, Spirit-filled people in Churches of Christ. We have elders with the heart of a shepherd, good and godly men, who would like to see their congregations be spiritually dynamic. And we have as many preachers as the next church, maybe more, who are really involved in lifting people from the despair of sectism and legalism by pointing them to Jesus as sin-bearer. We have an increasing number of concerned teachers, especially among the younger set, who are saying just those things that need to be said, not only in Bible classes and on campus, but in our main-line papers as well. And the gracious spirit of love and forebearance is a growing reality, especially in the fringe areas of mission fields, prayer groups, and mini-meetings, not to mention the miracle of unity forums. To be sure, there is good reason for optimism, and this article is not saying that our folk can't be or that none is really religious in the Churches of Christ. I am only saying that it is difficult! That is probably true of other religious communions as well, but I am a homebody, and I believe that house cleaning is part of that charity that begins at home.

So I am speaking of a *general* condition that prevails among us – and thank God for all those noble exceptions! There is a tone or setting that we create, something like what the Germans call the *sitz im leben*, that is unspiritual. This is the case, I believe, due to our neglect of those truths that root the soul deeply in the soil of love and truth. We have neglected the Cross, failing to point to it with the assurance of *that's how God loves!* We have given our people a *stipulated* gospel rather than "the gospel of the *grace* of God." We have taught as if the church itself is the end rather than the family of God on earth being the means of cultivating Christlikeness. And we have well nigh proved that a people can be *right* without bearing the image of Jesus.

In short, our problem is unveiled in that line of scripture that heads this essay. We have the *form*, a rather consistent form in name, doctrine and practice, but how about the power? Religion is to be powerful! The apostle says the kingdom of God is not just talk, but *power* (1 Cor. 4:20), and in Eph. 1:19 he refers to those resources of power that are available to us all in the Spirit. Let's face it, we cannot have had a leadership all these years that has either ignored or poked fun at the idea of a Spirit-filled church and still be a people "strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might." And that is what 2 Tim. 3:5 is talking about, people who have a form of religion but *deny* the power of it.

The answer to such a problem is always Jesus, who is to be *both* Lord and Christ to us, which is to say that the answer is both simple and profound. To believe in him as the Son of God, the Christ, is of course, the basis of our religion. But that religion does not take hold deeply within us until that belief grows into trust, in which we "reverence Christ in our hearts as *Lord.*" To enthrone him as Lord of our hearts is when religion is no longer mere form, bur power. The indwelling Holy Spirit is our helper in cultivating Jesus' lordship within us and in providing us with those resources of power that make all the difference. It is then a different world and a different church, for one is a different person. And it can be that way in your life and, through you, in your family and congregation. So, you can be really religious even among our own folk, and then when enough of us seek that kind of power in our lives, well, that's why we send out this journal like we do.
– *the Editor*

A Strange Story out of Dallas . . .

PREACHERS AND MONEY

A recent news item reveals that Dr. W. A. Criswell, longtime minister of the 18,000-member First Baptist Church in Dallas, is returning to the church all the salary he has received over the past 30 years. Counting all the gratuities, this totals $600,000, and he expects to have all of it returned by the time of his death. Any remaining amount will be taken care of by his will.

Dr. Criswell is able to do this because of profitable investments he has made through the years. He says he has always wanted to serve the Lord without renumeration. "I want to give back to the church everything that it has given to me so that when I meet the Lord I can say I did all my work freely," he says.

Needless to say that what this Baptist preacher is doing is rare indeed, but it is a rarity that should cause a lot of us to stop and think. It is so remote from the general attitude of preachers in all churches, including Churches of Christ, as to be embarrassing. Dr. Criswell does not, of course, imply by this action that preachers should not be paid, for he surely believes that they should be supported and supported well. Nor does he indicate that all preachers should follow his example and make an effort to return to the church the salary they have received through the years. But he does seem to be saying that it is consistent to the Christian faith for one to serve Jesus without charge *if he is able to do so.*

But this is a rare view in these days of clerical professionalism. If one preaches for a church or churches these days – and *for* may be the right word here – he expects to be paid, whether he needs it or not. Sermons have a price tag, and the Church of Christ has been educated to this as well as other churches. What happens in the pulpit has a monetary value, not unlike the services of an attorney or a side of bacon. If the regular man is absent from the pulpit, his substitute is paid. The substitute may be a member of the congregation, but he is nonetheless paid, especially if he bears the image of a

preacher, irrespective of the adequacy of his income in some other field. Preachers are paid for sermonizing and not in view of their need. This is evident in the tragic cases of those aged ministers who are no longer wanted for pulpit work. They well nigh starve. We take up a collection, based on 1 Cor. 16:2, which was for poor saints, and distribute it on the basis of performance rather than need.

If one can perform, then he is to be paid. Such is the trend even among Churches of Christ. We now have professional song leaders, who are usually men who already have adequate income. They make an extra $25.00 or $50.00 a week for leading the saints in praise to God! We have professional youth ministers, and the salaries they can pull is something else. Not counting the effect it has upon a congregation, I wonder what it must do to a mere boy, barely out of college, to pay him money that seasoned people do not even make, all in the name of Christ. It hardly underscores the apostolic dictum to one young worker: "Suffer hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:3). Paul might have been able to say, "I know how to abound and I know how to be in want" (Phil. 4:12), but with today's shortage of preachers there are fewer and fewer who share in both of those experiences.

We teach our youth to be professionals, to expect money for what they do. The Quakers can conduct worldwide mercy missions with people going at their own expense or on meager salaries. The Mormons enlist hundreds of their youth for two-year ministries in house-to-house evangelism, paying them nothing at all, not even room and board. They save to finance their own way or they are maintained by their families. And there's the Peace Corps. But we'll pay a youth a handsome salary for ministering to kids, a work any number of couples in a congregation would surely be willing to do.

One of our professors in Memphis recently observed in one of our papers that his congregation pays for Sunday morning sermons but not those given Sunday evening. He was wondering why there would be a difference.

If sermons are worth, say $100.00 each, or perhaps $200.00 for the more elegant ones, and if hymns bring the leader $5.00 or $10.00 each, why shouldn't a well-worded prayer have monetary value? In comparison to the foregoing market prices, I have heard prayers that would surely be worth $7.50, perhaps even $10.00 in these days of inflation. A deacon could keep tab on those who pray, and at the end of each month they could be issued a check. Three public prayers might add $30.00 a month to one's income. Some churches have long since been paying choirs. If people are paid because they perform, then consistency would demand that we go all the way.

Giving sermons becomes something of a racket for our moonlighting preachers across the brotherhood. The college campus is typical, for there full-time students and well-paid teachers feed upon the churches through "Sunday preaching" like fungus upon a body. It is common for a teacher at one of our colleges to add several thousands of dollars a year to his income by being a Sunday visitor. The accrediting agencies take a dim view of this, and the colleges would like to get away from the practice, but it is like killing the goose that lays the golden egg to a lot of teacher-preachers.

I recall a schoolteaching brother that spent a summer at ACC back in the 40's. He "found a church" right away, but he told me he wouldn't take it if he didn't get $15.00 a Sunday, which wasn't bad in those days when men with families didn't make much more than that in five days. Well, the brother is still at it. He is now a Ph.D. with a good salary from one of our colleges, but he has all these years drawn a second substantial salary as the minister of a church, which usually amounts to Sunday preaching and maybe a class or two through the week. That old song we sometimes sing, *It pays to serve Jesus*, can mean different things to different people!

Dr. Criswell – I realize he's a Baptist and ought not to count – but anyway, he talks about meeting Jesus and being able to say that he served him without pay. We have numerous preachers in the Church of Christ that are financially able to do likewise, but apparently they don't see it like Criswell does. Some of them are in insurance making good money, some in real estate, some in investments and sales, some have their own businesses. But I don't believe I can name a single one, though there may be some, who serves the church without pay. However much they make in insurance, they still unashamedly take the church's money for sermons. And that of course includes some of the money taken from widows and the aged in the congregation that no longer have even one salary. Believe me, it takes a guy with a mercenary streak in him as wide as his belly to do that and then tell folk that he has scriptural authority for doing so.

We are so infected with this "so much preach so much pay" thing that we have lost the vision of service for Jesus' sake. I recently visited a small but well-heeled Church of Christ in south Texas. After a three day visit one of the elders, a college professor, handed me a $300.00 check (for three days! that's $36,000 a year!). I passed it back to him, saying that I thought he understood that my expenses were already taken care of. "But you can't do that!" he insisted, "You have to have money!" I told him that I had money. Still he insisted, assuring me that I had earned it. Then I said, "Don't you serve this church in teaching and other ways, many, many hours?" He agreed that he did. "Do they pay you?" I asked him. "No." So I said, "You have your own income, so you give your time to the church, right?" He agreed. "Then if I have my own income, why shouldn't I too give my time?" That did it, but he still wanted me to take it and give it to some worthy cause. "Keep it and give it to some worthy cause yourself, for it isn't mine to give," I told him.

But I have concluded that churches that might otherwise use you are reluctant to do so if they can't pay you. You make them feel obligated, or maybe they feel they lose some control over a man if there is no money involved. In his travel letters Alexander Campbell tells of how he had difficulty *not* taking money. It only shows what an insidious evil we have drawn in reference to serving Jesus and mammon.

Any of us can, of course, make good use of an extra $400 or $600 or $800 a month as a second salary, for we never have everything we want. But may I ask with all candor, *what does it mean, after all, to be a servant of*

Jesus, the penniless carpenter from Galilee? There is something about it all that has led the pastor of the largest Baptist church in the world to turn back his salary and serve Jesus without pay. Why can't that spirit be more prevalent?

I want to make it clear that I believe in the support of preachers who have need of the money since they devote their full time to the work and do not have adequate income otherwise. If I were an elder employing a minister to be a servant to the community or an evangelist to the world, and I would hire one on no other grounds, I would do so on a non-contractural basis. I would want to employ him for life, leaving him free to go anywhere that he might be needed. I would urge my congregation to support him financially as they support him morally and spiritually, which would be liberally. Since not one preacher in ten has the sense (or *cents!*) to save any money, I would from the outset arrange an investment program for him, so that a portion of his income would go into some annuity. Either that or I would arrange for our support to continue until his dying day, even if that reaches 20 years beyond his ability to produce. I would not base this on a stipulated salary or contract, but I would urge the church to see to it that he is always supported so that he *abounds.* He in turn should be indifferent to his income, never influenced by what others might offer him, but looking to the Lord to bless him through those who are supporting him – *for life!* A preacher worth his salt has the *right* to be supported, but no man has the right to *demand* support. Trust should come in there somewhere, and it should work both ways.

If the time should come that our preacher becomes wealthy through inheritance or in an investment, like Criswell has, or if he should take a job that pays him sufficiently, then he should in the name of decency and justice refuse money from the church, though he continues to do what he has always done, serve Jesus. And, yes, why should he not then so give to the church that he actually turns back all he ever received, making it possible for the church to hold up the hands of some other man. "Let not the church be burdened" is, after all, a Bible principle. I like that, and it has more of a scriptural ring than what we usually see, even if it does come out of the First Baptist Church in Dallas! – *the Editor*

If any one tells you a person speaks ill of you, do not make excuse about what is said, but answer: "He was ignorant of my other faults else he would not have mentioned these alone." – *Epictetus*

CONCERNING ACTS 2:38 – C!

It is odd how some passages of scripture become especially associated with a particular religious group. Whether Pentecostals or premillennialists, Adventists or Mormons, it is rather predictable what verses a particular persuasion will stress. This is not particularly bad, but it may be presumed that the more catholic a people become the less this sort of thing will be true of them. That we in Churches of Christ have our select passages cannot be denied. If the Baptists have John 3:16, then we have Acts 2:38; and that of course does not keep either of them from being among the great texts of the Bible.

Acts 2:38 has become a pivotal reference by which values are weighed. It is common among us to hear, "If we taught that like we do Acts 2:38 ..." And it is sometimes shortened, as I recall one letter reading, "And that is just as important as 2:38." I even understood one correspondent who complained, "We've had enough of '38'; what we need now is lessons on Christian living." Out west of Pecos it is something else to talk about a "38", but it is safe to say among our folk that "38", certainly 2:38, comes as near being a talisman as anything.

It is something like gopher wood. Some of our folk hear little of mesquite, sassafras, or gum but they are all at home with gopher. And it is always predictable in what context "the wood" will appear. At a summit meeting of some Christian Church and Church of Christ leaders in St. Louis some years back there was some rather candid exchanges on the instrumental music question. Some of the highly educated Christian Church men asked the non-instrumentalists to state precisely just what their objections were to the instrument. One prominent preacher was soon saying, "Well, you know God told Noah to use gopher wood." The conversation went on and on, brotherly as well as informative. When it came time for that same preacher to say a word further, he advised, "Now God told Noah to use gopher wood on that ark, and that excluded all other wood." It doesn't particularly help when our Christian Church brothers point out that the gopher wood is quite beside the point, for it is a question as to whether Noah was left free to use hammer, saw or chisel, though they are not specified, in erecting the ark.

Well, this is not a discussion on instrumental music. I am only saying that some things, like gopher wood and 2:38, have gained a place in our repertoire. If I had a wood specialty shop, I'd like to handle gopher. It would really be something for a faithful brother to point with pride to his decorative mantle and say, "It's gopher." And how about a salad bowl made of gopher? And a bathtub? Well, there's no need for intemperance.

As for Acts 2:38, I must admit that I glory in its great truths, and there are few passages that say so much in so few words. I might even agree with the brother that insists it is the greatest passage of holy writ. But I must question if it is *really* our passage all that much. It has three parts you know: *a*, *b*, and *c*. We have done our thing with *a* and *b*, but how about *c?* Acts 2:38*c*! A reference like that will arouse them from their nodding.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized" is *a*; "everyone of

you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins" is *b*; "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" is *c*. Acts 2:38c. I recommend this as a fresh new scriptural reference for our people and for all the world.

Old Walter Scott, the golden oracle of the Restoration Movement, was well aware of Acts 2:38c when he reduced the plan of salvation to the fingers of one hand. He fingered them off with great success, and to the fascination of Alexander Campbell: *faith, repentence, baptism, remission of sins,* and the *Holy Spirit*. He would point out that the first three were man's part and the last two God's part. Scott would enter a town, go to a school and go over the finger exercise with the kids, telling them to bring their parents to hear him that night. His success was phenomenal, and he is credited with getting the Movement off the ground through mass conversion.

The finger exercise has remained with us through the years, sometimes referred to as the steps of salvation. There are still five steps, but they have changed, for the familiar H-B-R-C-B that have found their way onto many a blackboard and chart stand for *hear, believe, repent, confess, baptize*. It adds *hear*, which Scott would assume to be implied, and *confess*, which he would not see as formal but as a continuing profession of the believer. And it deletes remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. It proposes to set forth all that man is to do to be saved, but it omits what God does for man, which was an important part of Scott's presentation.

The omission of the Holy Spirit in the "Steps" approach testifies to what has happened to us as a people in recent generations. Like those Paul met at Ephesus, many of our people barely know that the Holy Spirit has ever been given, and the notion that the Spirit is virtually equivalent to the written Word is still prevalent. Some of our people have an appreciation for the gift of the Spirit, but they hardly accept the idea that he is really at work in their lives today. The truth is that our people generally are uncomfortable in a conversation about the Holy Spirit. He is largely absent in our teaching and preaching. If in our presentation of the plan of salvation, which most of our folk were nourished on, we had stressed the mission of the Spirit, as Scott did, we would be a more spititual people today.

Our neglect cannot be attributed to any ambiguity in scripture, for Acts 2:38c has been there all along, and it is clear enough that the Holy Spirit is ours as a gift from God when we respond to the gospel in faith and obedience. Peter speaks of "the promise" that is for all, and in Eph. 1:14 Paul assures us that we received "the seal of the promised Holy Spirit," which he relates to the eventual redemption of our bodies. He stresses the fact that our bodies are shrines of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19), and in Rom. 8:9 he says that "if one does not possess the Spirit of Christ, he is not a Christian" (NEB). We may presume that if that verse had said about baptism what it says of the Spirit that it would have top billing all these years.

That every believer receives the Spirit is evident enough throughout the scriptures.

"The Holy Spirit is given by God to those who are obedient to him" (Acts 5:32).

"The heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (Lk. 11:13).

"Did you receive the Spirit by keeping the law or by believing the gospel message" (Gal. 3:2)?

"Do not give way to drunkenness and the dissipation that goes with it, but let the Holy Spirit fill you" (Eph. 5:18).

"God's love has flooded our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us" (Rom. 5:5).

"God bestows upon you his Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 4:8).

This heavenly Guest is not some slothful roomer who gratuitously imposes himself upon us, but he is busy doing His thing in our lives, blessing us to the degree that we release our will to his direction.

He makes intercession for us and helps us in our weakness (Rom. 8:26). He confirms that we are sons of God by His presence (Gal. 4:6). He floods our hearts with love(Rom. 5:5). He illumines our inward eyes so that we might better understand the wealth of our blessings (Eph. 1:18). He moves and directs our lives (Rom. 8:14). He harvests in our lives such fruit as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22). He gives us the Word of God, the sword (Eph. 6:17). He gives the church sundry gifts for its edification (Rom. 12:6-8). "In each of us the Spirit is manifested in one particular way, for some useful purpose" (1 Cor. 12:7).

In the light of all this I'd say Acts 2:38c deserves an *A*, and it should be moved up somewhat in our list of priorities. – *the Editor*

Notes from a Travel Journal . . .

INTO TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

One advantage of living in Texas is that one has an inexhaustible supply of places to visit without getting out of his own state. Though I have lived here all my life, until this trip I had only touched the fringes of that area known as "the Hill Country," more recently branded (almost literally) "LBJ". This journey was extra special since Ouida was along. Just the two of us. We left the kids at home to do what they would, and off we went to visit with two different congregations and a number of friends. It was a kind of honeymoon-vacation, which has been the story all along of our 30 years together. Living with Ouida is one grand, continual honeymoon, and since our work together is so exciting, it can be called a vacation just as well.

Some Texans tend to stretch the size of the Hill Country, even to include Austin and San Antonio, but it is properly four relatively small counties, Kimble, Gillespie, Blanco, and Kerr, lying due west and slightly south of Austin. There is a definite change in terrain and climate as one enters, for the altitude is about 2,000 feet and the hills roll like huge ocean waves. The

natives are pleased with their cool summer nights without air-conditioning. It is ideal tourist country and there are many who retire there.

We took the time to make our first visit to the LBJ ranch, and we would urge any visitor to our state to do likewise, for they have done it up Texas-style and give one a good ride. Literally. One is escorted up and down the small ranch and back and forth across the Pedernales in a sleek bus, with the voices of both Lady Bird and the late former President describing the scenes and telling the history. You not only see the river where LBJ waded and fished as a boy, but the guest house where the likes of Dean Rusk and Secretary McNamara slept and the grounds where kings of earth have walked. They do it up right, perhaps better than it really is. There is now a sizable state park adjacent to the ranch, with tourist center and memorial building, all monitored and financed publicly. The government even runs cattle on the ranch to preserve the "down home" atmosphere. Lady Bird is still around, of course, and is often seen going and coming, but she is now free of responsibility for the ranch with the government taking care of everything, which seems to be the name of the game these days. She is still protected by the Secret Service.

LBJ does not and did not draw especially high marks by the old timers in the area. Ouida and I made it a point to ask. He hurt himself by seizing a neighbor's land for the park. The neighbor won a higher price in court, but he still had to give it up, which he did not want to do. The home folk are aware of how the President would talk about his "boyhood home," but the land that he made that fellow sell was that man's boyhood home too. But apart from that incident the former President would win no popularity contests in the Hill Country, and the natives would just as soon it not be called "LBJ country," for they feel that it has glory in its own right.

Fredericksburg, which is about 15 miles west of the ranch, is a quaint little German town that dates back to some of the earliest settlements of the state. It is Lutheran and German Catholic, but we have a lovely little Church of Christ there, which is the only congregation of the Restoration family. We stayed at the Sunday House Motel for two days while we shared with the brethren, a motel that takes its name from the old custom of the German farmers having houses in town, to which they would come for the weekend and for church from their larger spreads out in the hills, and some of these old Sunday houses still stand. It is interesting to walk down the drag of this old town and visit the quaint little businesses, most all run by old German families. We especially enjoyed the smell of various German breads baking, and that aroma drew us to a little shop where we enjoyed cinnamon rolls right out of the oven, prepared the same way as back before the Civil War and even back in Germany.

We enjoyed all the tales of the town's history and even the brags of how it is the only place in the world to live, which Texans have learned to bear from other Texans. I was intrigued by the old Leutegemeinde, a small building for all faiths, built a century and a half ago. The Luthreans and the Catholics might not have been united, but at least they could share the same building. Their successors have not been so financially prudent, for Fredericksburg, like most towns, has a house for every sect.

John Paden ministers to our congregation there, a church that struggled for many years for survival, and he and his wife Jeanne are precious souls who really love the Lord. And that is what our sessions were about, Jesus, that wonderful person of the Bible that may well be a stranger even to those who wear his name. We had a special session with the sisters, which included more of that elegant German food, and studied together the mission of the Holy Spirit in our lives today. I find that the question, *What is the Spirit doing for you now?* is one that is almost completely new to our folk. The first response is a kind of *What!!* But the Fredericksburg congregation is in love and happy in the Lord and united with him and each other.

Farther south in Hondo, which is just below the heart of the Hill Country, I addressed the Church of Christ on the mystery of our religion, expanding on the description of the Christ given in that great chant recorded in 1 Tim. 3:16, which is one of my favorite texts. This is a growing church, well housed, and its minister is Frank Perkins, Jr., a man loved and respected by those who know him. We were there to visit John and Norma Jennings, Norma being the daughter of our beloved Guy Land of Wynnewood Chapel in Dallas. We found Norma rejoicing that her aged father-in-law, of one of the old Hondo families, had recently obeyed Jesus in baptism. John is a successful optometrist, and he and Norma have two of the most beautiful baby girls you would ever expect to see in or out of Texas. Since I performed their wedding ceremony some years ago, I was thankful to find them growing in the Lord and contributing in an important way in the life of the church and the community.

Out from Hondo toward Bandera live our longtime friends, Ralph and Wanda Hancock, who are growing wealthier and wiser on a ranch that grows so much deer that they operate a substantial deer-hunting business. They built blinds over their hundreds of acres, heated for the wintry chills, and Ralph delivers two hunters to each blind from his jeep, and he hopes they'll still be sober when he picks them up several hours later. If they don't obey his rules to fire only from a blind and only at a visible deer, he sends them home. He has more business than he wants, and even with an extended deer season there are not enough deer harvested, leaving too many to starve in the winter.

Ralph is the one that got us into the chicken business, and it was only at his insistence ("Mortgage your home if necessary") that we would have ever had such an adventure. So we always review that strange story when we get together, and he always gets a big bang out of my thanking him for making me rich. The Lord has given Ralph the gift of making money. If one can make money on that rocky soil around Hondo and on its deer that graze it diligently for dear life, I suppose he can make it off anything. Now a rich man, he started out selling hamburgers, Texas-size, of course.

This was definitely one of my most enjoyable and fruitful trips this year, mainly because Ouida was along. She loves people and relates to them so beautifully, and once she has been around for awhile people decide that this world is not such a bad place after all.

We didn't want to overdo it by returning home through the Hill Country, so we reveled in the luxury of freeways all the way home by way of San Antonio and Austin. But we brought back with us the memory of LBJ's description of the Pedernales, fresh baked German bread, Sunday houses both old and new, quaint little towns, little congregations that love Jesus, and friends that are more precious than gold. My travels among our folk these days convinces me that we are learning what Gilbert Chesterton was trying to tell the church in his day when he said, "It is not that Christianity has been tried and found wanting; it is that it has been tried and found difficult and abandoned." – *the Editor*

OUR CHANGING WORLD

E. G. Homrighausen, one of my teachers at Princeton, is retiring from 30 years of writing for *Theology Today*, much of which has been a kind of running chroncile on "The Church in the World." In his last installment he lists what he considers the most significant developments over the past generation, some of which are: 1) The birth and growth of the ecumenical movement, reflected in the World Council of Churches, which in 1948 had 147 churches from 48 countries and now has 263 churches from 90 countries, 40% of whom are from the Third World; despite all its weaknesses, it is the most important fact in church history in this century; 2) The calling of Vatican II, the most significant assembly of Roman Catholic leaders since the Council of Trent; the windows of the church were opened as never before, enabling the church to break out of its protective ghetto; 3) The survival of the church in Russia and Eastern Europe, despite all efforts to seduce it into union with totalitarian systems; it has passed through an age of martyrdom, with uncounted believers giving their lives for their faith; there are about one million Baptists in Russia, many of them now a part of the underground church; and yet 50 Orthodox churches still operate in Moscow, each providing two services each Sunday. 4) The growth of the churches has been phenomenal, especially in Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, the Pacific Islands, Africa, and Latin America, and this by the work of indigenous lay witness rather than by missionaries from the West. But what especially impresses Homrighausen is the impact that Jesus has had outside the established church. "Never has Jesus been so widely known and perhaps so highly regarded as he is at the present time, even outside the older Christian circles in Europe and the U. S.," he writes. He "turns on" youth; he is the center of musicals; he is the authentic person-for-others for many outside the church; he is the center of the current religious revival, one expression of which in the circulation of *Good News for Modern Man*, which has now passed the 40 million mark!

Richard Hall of the Proctor Street Church of Christ in Port Arthur writes of his exciting experience in attending the *Mission Magazine* seminar in Houston. Featured this year was William Kearly of the Covenant Church in Houston, speaking on "Worship in the Free Churches; A Call to New Life." While Kearly is a Baptist, his church is an effort toward unity in that it is made up of all backgrounds, including several from the Church of Christ. They have no building, but meet in the afternoon at a Disciples building, where they have their offices. It is a sharing church, dedicated to being helpful and kind to one another (Hb. 10:24). Mission's board of 40 concerned souls impressed Rich as hardly a "conspiracy to wreck the church," but as a sincere effort toward responsible Christian journalism. Vic Hunter, the editor, is quoted as saying he wished to listen to his readership, and he set forth a philosophy of "participatory journalism."

In Ira Rice's *Contending for the Faith* our brother Max R. Miller has a piece on "The Church of Christ Zoo." Instead of sheep being in the fold there is instead those who would fill the church with predacious creatures like serpents and buzzards. The zoo keepers, he tells us, are "the Ketchersides and the Garretts," which I presume includes Nell and Ouida. The predators are identified as instrumentalists, pentecostals and rationalists. The Bible sings of Jesus as purchasing "men for God of every race, language, people and nation and made of them a line of kings and priests" (Rev. 5:9), which is more diverse than we have yet attained, without any reference to a menagerie. Our good brother must realize that many of our folk are all caged in because of their fears of things like change and a new idea, whether they be in a zoo or not. Besides, whoever heard of a buzzard being in a zoo? If I were the keeper, it would be over my dead body!

In the current issue of the *Lexington Theological Quarterly* there is a historical review of the modern pentecostal movement. It began at the turn of the century with one Charles Parham in Topeka, Kansas. A Methodist preacher that felt a lack of spiritual power in his own life, he gathered around him a group of 40 concerned souls who became convinced that the power and success of the early church was the empowering by the Holy Spirit. The movement now boasts of 10 million members worldwide, including a formidable penetration of the Soviet Union.

First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh is featured in *Decision*, published by Billy Graham, as one of the great churches of today. Its building is used by 8,000 people every week even though it has but 2500 members. A thousand business men meet weekly for lunch and study; 400 women gather weekly in a similar way. Kids meet all over the place and all through the week. It has a staff of ten that ministers to 28,000 students in downtown Pittsburgh, and they call it " the Power and Light Company." Its concept of "ministering members" has resulted in 68 people over the past 20 years becoming public ministers of the Word. Thirty-five per cent of the church's income goes to missions of various kinds, and the pulpit is known to be strongly evangelical.